## REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application. Independent claims are 1, 11, 20, and 26.

Applicant has canceled claims 20-25.

The examiner uses Richards and Alkhatib in an office action dated February 22, 2005, to reject claims 1-3, 7, 8, 10-17 and 19 as having been obvious.

Claim 1, as amended, recites "establishing a second session between the destination computer system and the forwarder/relay service, the forwarder/relay service maintaining the second session if the first session is temporarily lost and re-establishing the virtual connection when then first session is re-established." At least this quoted claim feature is totaling absent from both Richards and Alkhatib.

Richards teaches establishing downspouts to clients from a nexus wherein the nexus maintains a list of registered downspouts. For a first client system to communicate to a second client system, the first client system establishes an upspout to the nexus. The first client sends data through its upspout to the nexus; the nexus sends the received data over a downspout to the second client system.

> **The nexus 110 maintains a table 112 for registered downspouts such as downspout 115 and 128. Additionally, the nexus provides an incoming communications module 114 for handling incoming communications. Through the downspouts 116 and 128, the nexus 110 communicates with two or more clients 120 and 130. The client 120 has a receive/process communication module 122 and a send communication module 124. Correspondingly, the client 130 has a receive/process communication module 132 and a send communication module 134. The clients 120 and 130 receive downspouts 115 and 128, which relay information from the nexus 110. The information carried by the downspouts 115 and 128 can include data as well as statistical and controlled information. To communicate with the client 130, the client 120 sends an upspout 126 through its send communication module 124. The information relayed through the upspout 126 is handled by the nexus incoming communications module 114. The incoming communication module 114 in turn relays the message transmitted by the client 120 through the downspout 128. (Col. 5, lines 11-30)**

No where does Richards teach or suggest maintaining a downspout from the nexus or an upspout to the nexus in the event that a downspout from the nexus or an upspout to the nexus is temporarily lost. Further, no where does Richards teach or suggest re-establishing a virtual connection when a downspout from the nexus or an upspout to the nexus is re-established. Richards fails to teach or suggest any re-establishment of either a downspout or an upspout.

Alkhatib does not establish a second session between the destination computer system and the forwarder/relay service, the forwarder/relay service maintaining the second session if the first session is temporarily lost and re-establishing the virtual connection when then first session is re-established. Alkhatib creates a new connection when an old connection times out:

> **There are a number of general limitations on the IPNGw system. Only one connection request can be accepted from a given domain at a time. Because the original DNS request may have come from a DNS server instead of the requesting computer, there cannot be more than one DNS request entertained from the same domain. Otherwise, the requesting client will be ambiguous and a connection may be routed to the wrong server. This constraint lasts until the connection is established. At this point, the original request will be removed from the list of pending connections and new requests from the domain will be entertained. Experimentation has shown that the time for connection establishment is approximately 4 seconds (dependent on distance and traffic). In general, locked out requests will be dropped instead of being explicitly denied so that the locked out client will have another chance to connect when their DNS retries. In this case, the only noticeable change in service would be a momentary slowness during DNS resolution. However, if many clients are trying to establish connections from the same domain at the same time, it is possible that some of these clients will time-out before a connection slot becomes available. (Col. 6, lines 1-23)**

Assuming there is a suggestion to combine Richards and Alkhatib, and there is no such suggestion, the resultant combination would be a method of establishing a new downspout or upspout in the event that an old upspout or downspout is lost. No combination teaches or suggests establishing a second session between the destination computer system and the forwarder/relay service, the forwarder/relay service maintaining the second session if the first session is temporarily lost and re-establishing the virtual connection when then first session is re-established. Accordingly, claim 1 is not obvious in view of Richards and Alkhatib, whether taken separately or in combination.

Claim 11, as amended, recites "maintaining the session between the forwarder/relay service and the destination computer system if the session between the source computer system and the service is lost." Claim 26, as amended, recites "maintain the session between the forwarder/relay service and the destination computer system if the session between the source computer system and the forwarder/relay service is lost." For at least the reasons described with respect to claim 1, claims 11 and 26 are not obvious in view of Richards and Alkhatib, whether taken separately or in combination.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, reference 10559-227001.

Respectfully submitted,

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